

September
2026

ASCENSION
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

8888 County Rd 64
Daphne AL 36526
Church: 251-626-7500
School: 251-348-7510

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ASCENSION NEWSLETTER

"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." 1 Timothy 4: 16

I do not know if you are aware, but in our Lutheran Church Missouri Synod almost 1/5 of our congregations are in a vacancy which means that these congregations do not have a fulltime pastor, most of which cannot afford to pay a fulltime salary. I mention this as I think about the installation service yesterday of Rev, Dr. Ross Johnson at Redeemer in Fairhope, AL. While it didn't take as long as normal for Redeemer, most calling congregations go through a 2 - 3 year period before the call comes together as pastor and congregation become one in calling and service.

During the Rite of Installation, the candidate is asked to confirm their commitment to the Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God and to our Lutheran Confessions as the right exposition (explanation) of the doctrines the Bible teaches and we confess. As one of the dozen or so guest pastors in attendance, we were reminded of the same vows we took in our respective calls. The purpose of the vow (and the congregation, too, makes a vow in faithful service to the mission of our Lord) aligns with what the apostle Paul was writing to Timothy about for the purpose of saving **"both you and your hearers."** So, it is not just the pastor who needs be aware of how important the right understanding of God's word we need to have and teach from, but also the members of God's Church deserve, and in fact need the confidence in the same right teaching for heaven's fullest blessings that are found only in Christ.

In a sound-bite world of shining-thing distractions that detour our attention span, it is easy to be led astray from the sure foundation of our Christian faith. ***"The Spirit says that in later time some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons."*** (1 Tim 4:1) This implies that the devil hasn't taken a break from his lying, deceptive ways. In fact, the Scripture says that most in the world are deceived and are in the process of being led astray and even in danger of being handed over to this deception by the Lord Himself. (see especially 2 Thess. 2: 9-12; 2 Tim 4: 3-4) We are not obligated to these myths, false doctrines and distractions, but rather to promote the truth found in God's Word that leads us in the ways of His righteousness and peace.

Continued page 2 --->

Ascension Christian School Director -

Hey Church!

School is officially underway, and I'm so excited to share that God has brought us the most wonderful families and the sweetest little children. It has already been such a blessing having them here, loving on them, sharing God's Word with them, and providing them with a strong, Christ-centered education and curriculum.

We've had three more enrollments in just the past two weeks, and we are continuing to give tours and meet new families. Thank you so much for all of your prayers. We truly trust God to grow our school organically and to bring exactly the right families He wants to be part of our school community.

I also want to say a huge thank you for all of the beautiful plants you donated! I appreciate them so much, and they will be making their way into our classrooms very soon.

More on page 2 --->

(Continued from Page 1)

When it comes to the Lutheran Confessions, it is not unlike the earlier days of the Church in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th century when false doctrines and beliefs crept into the church, creeds were biblically developed to protect the church against these heresies. In Luther's day, as many of us have read of his early struggles in the faith and doctrine of the church, it wasn't until the light of the Gospel burst forth while he was teaching Romans 1: 16-17. The doctrine of Justification by faith alone, in Christ alone through Scripture alone was unrecognizable in church teaching until the Holy Spirit opened Luther's heart to the truth that it is the **Gospel that is the power of God unto salvation...** not by works we do for God.

Thus began the multi-decades struggle for Gods' truth to prevail in the church when in 1580, 34 years after Luther died, the doctrines of our Lutheran Confessions were put together in the Book of Concord to lead the Church into the future as God allows the world to continue before Christ returns.

Does correct doctrine matter to both pastor and parishioner? Yes, it does. Do we each have need to receive and be led by the best God has to offer for our salvation and peace? Yes, we do. Does the same go for our family, neighbor and friends? Yes, it does. Then we will remain mindful of these gifts of our Lord Jesus that continues to keep us prayerfully in the one true faith unto life everlasting!

In Christ service to you and for the advancement of His Kingdom always,

Pastor Ralph

September Worship Themes

September 6 – Becoming Like Children!

September 13 – Forgiveness Wins the Day

September 20 – The Kingdom Advances

Cynthia Sundman, a missionary serving in a rural village in Peru, shared these words during a talk to a church group in Snohomish, Washington:

"I have struggled to learn Spanish and spent countless weeks sleeping on dirt floors surrounded by rats and bats. In an effort to assimilate into the Peruvian culture, I have learned to eat large amounts of rice, fried guinea pig and even roasted ants.

"I am often asked why I chose to become a missionary. I have only one answer: 'God called me to serve there, and I must obey.'"

—From her talk, *"Where Can I Serve You, Lord?"*

ACS Director! (Continued from page 1)

I can't believe we are already about two and a half weeks into the school year. Time is flying! Thank you again for all of your prayers, encouragement, and support. We are so grateful for our church family and excited to see what God has in store for our school this year.

With love and gratitude,

Samantha Chauvet

Officers

John Peterson, President

Richard Tellman, Vice-President

Alex Norton, Treasurer

Recording Secretary , open

Open, Financial Secretary

Directors

Evangelism, Open

Jean Canupp, Education ,

Stewardship, Open

Marian Bencke, Fellowship,

Gary Rapp, Grounds and Board of Properties,

Public Relations, Open

Jordon Kotowske , Parochial School Board Chair

Youth, Open

Elders

Tom Hanley

Peter Bencke

Michael Schulz

Tom Wilkens



Thank you Ascension, your giving to the school in August was \$730.00!



Anniversaries and Birthdays

Anniversaries	
Phil and Song Stolf	September 1
Richard and Cynthia Tellman	September 7
Mike and Sharon McAllister	September 20
Birthdays	
James Tellman	September 2
Sherry McDowell	September 5
Greg Nichols	September 10
Sharon McAllister	September 14
Beth Navarro	September 14
Ralph Hough	September 29
Lucille Hogancamp	September 30



Want to help with property improvements, yard care? **We will need some extra lawn help in September and October.** Give Gary Rapp a call. He'll set you up! 661.202.2441



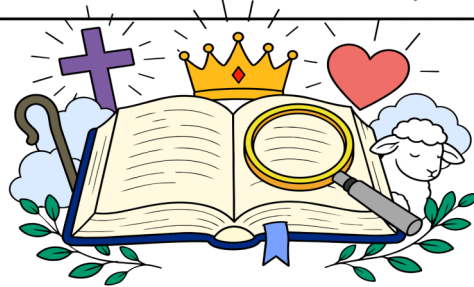
Psalm 103 (ESV) begins: "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his ____." What should we "not forget"?

- A. goodness
- B. kindness
- C. gifts

Puzzle!

NAMES OF GOD

Every name of God tells us something about his power, love and care for his people. Use the Scripture clues to uncover just some of these special names.



F _____ (Matthew 6:9)

A _____ and O _____ (Revelation 1:8)

I A ____ (Exodus 3:14)

Y _____ (Exodus 6:2-3)

G _____ M _____ H _____ (Genesis 14:19)

G _____ A _____ (Genesis 17:1)

R _____ (Psalm 18:2)

J _____ (Psalm 75:7)

F _____ (Psalm 18:2)

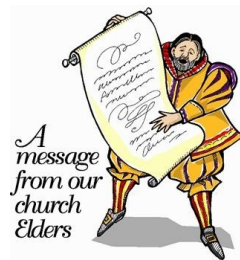
H _____ O _____ (Isaiah 40:25)

Answer key: Father, Alpha and Omega, I AM, Yahweh, God Most High, God Almighty, Rock, Judge, Fortress, Holy One

"Lutheranism and Other Denominations" Booklet

There are thousands of Christian denominations in the world today. With so many options, what are the odds that Lutherans really have everything right?

But it is not a matter of odds. As President Harrison writes in his introduction to this booklet, all these differences come down to a few simple questions, starting with this one: What is the highest authority in the church?



Lutherans hold that God's Word alone, found in Holy Scripture, is the true source of doctrine for the church. And we believe that the Lutheran Confessions are faithful to that Scripture at every point.

This resource from *The Lutheran Witness*, adapted from our October 2022 print issue, gives a short introduction to 10 major Christian denominations (as well as "non-denominational" Christianity) — what they teach about God and about man, and the sources they draw these teachings from. The booklet also shares the Lutheran confession to each of these denominations, showing where their doctrine strays from the testimony of Scripture.

Table of Contents

- Preface by the Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison - Roman Catholic - Eastern Orthodox - The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - Anglican - Reformed - Presbyterian - Methodist - Baptist - Pentecostal
- Amish & Mennonite - Non-Denominational

Conclusion: Justification, the Article Upon Which the Church Stands or Falls

We hope that this booklet will aid and encourage you in sharpening your confession of Christ crucified and of the Scriptures, as you seek to confess Christ to your friends and neighbors. This resource can be used for personal reading or in classroom, youth group or Bible class settings.

Congregations, teachers and individuals are welcome to print and use this resource for any educational or catechetical purpose.

[Lutheran-Witness-Other-Denominations.pdf](#)

The Word for the World

Me! Me! Me! Is that not what we see all around us? Everyone wants to be seen, listened to and exalted. There are experts everywhere on any topic you choose. However, in Mark 10: 43-45, Jesus told his disciples: "But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." We worship Jesus because he served and saved all mankind. He calls us to be like him. We are to exalt him and not ourselves. Be a faithful servant.

In Christ, Gary Kinne



Our Mind's Storehouse



Benjamin Weir, a missionary in the Middle East, was taken captive by terrorists and held in solitary confinement. Blindfolded and cut off from the outside world, he endured deep isolation with no one to speak to and no sense of where he was. What could he do? In many ways, all he had was a beating heart and a mind still free to think. To endure the long days, he began drawing from what was stored within him. After his release, he reflected, "I called up my memory bank, things that were stored in my mind."

He recalled Scripture passages he had learned years before. He remembered lines from William Shakespeare, the words of hymns and songs, and the faces of those he loved. He reflected on his work, his family and the steady grace of God throughout his life.

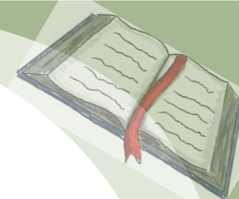
Looking back, he said, "Whatever is in your mind is what you have to draw on."

That truth lingers. What we place in our minds today shapes what we will lean on tomorrow.

It invites a simple but important question: What are we storing away? May we fill our thoughts with what is true, pure and life-giving, with the story of Christ and the hope of His saving grace.

Sunday and More !

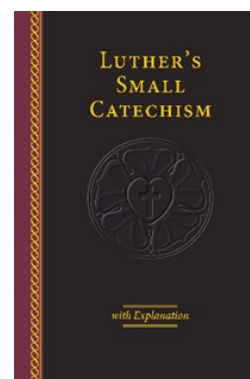
1. **Sunday Adult Bible** focuses on the current worship lessons. Children Sunday School meets in their respective rooms in the south hallway! The Sunday School teachers stand at the ready to love, teach and instruct the younger folks! Contact Jean Canupp for more info!
2. **The Wednesday Morning Bible Study**- We are in **2 Corinthians**. Study Guides are available. Please join us. It is never too late to jump in! We meet at 9:00 am in the Narthex.
3. **Men's Breakfast New Time!** – September 12 at 8am. We will continue in our Missionary Pathways Discovery Bible Studies.
4. **June Stewardship Corner** – *"Stewardship is the joyous activity of the Christian in service to the Kingdom of God."*



"In those days when the number of disciples was increasing,"... Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." Acts 6: 1-3

As the church grows, the need for the church to increase its capacity for service continues to grow as well! For the longest time, decades, many have pushed (and believed) the idea that we need less population growth, not more. That thought is a tool of the devil because it seeks to do away with God's commands and promises. The first which is to ***"be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth."*** The promises follow God's continue blessing and presence in the life of those who believe. As a child or adult grows in wisdom and in stature it shows up in the faithful stewardship of the gifts God gives to each of us. Thus, the words of our Lord (Matthew 25: 14-27) when the master returns to see how his money has been put to use, he finds that those who gained an increase did rightly by the gift and were able to receive more resources to steward/manage and bring more increase. So it is as God's church gains in disciples and community needs grow, we are spiritually gifted with the desire and wisdom to faithfully steward/manage what is before us as we read in the Scripture above. It does us well to ask, "Where has God placed us and our resources to do the most for His kingdom work? How are we doing? What can we do better? Is there something else on the horizon we need to pay attention to? These are all kinds of ways to help us think beyond the 'why' we are here and grow in the "Whose we are" for purposes right in front of us. As the ministry of the Word continues to train us up, the greater the service to the needs around are met!

5. As we open our Luther's "Small Catechism", we read these words, "as the head of the family should teach them in a simple way his household". We have been through the 10 Commandments, the articles of the Apostles Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism and now Confession, or The Office of the Keys! Last month we understood the admonition to (Acts 2: 38) to repent and be Baptized. Baptism was the response of those who were 'cut to the heart' over their sin. How did they come to that position of need, felt or not? Simply by being taught that according to God's will for man and in light of His commandments, we find everyone falls short of living up to God's will done His way and for His purposes. In our Catechism, when we are taught to confess we are looking at two things: 1) confronted by our sinful nature, we admit that we are sinners and in need of a Savior; 2) and because of this need we receive forgiveness of our sins through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. This is called Absolution. In the context of worship, Absolution is pronounced by the pastor and received by the Christian as *"from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven."* The Office of the Keys is that *special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent."* We are also taught in James 5: 16, ***"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."*** This mutual understanding between every Christian is that restoration and reconciliation between God and one another happens when forgiveness is sought out, given and received. God pleasing spiritual health depends on these means of His grace that offers and gives what He desires for all: the forgiveness of sins earned by Jesus dying on the cross and the new life to live in that forgiveness found in His resurrection! Let us thank and praise God for this incredible gift!





Choir Practice! Choir practice for the Advent and Christmas season resumes on October 11 at 7:00 pm. New members are welcome to join but should contact Vincentine to reserve a music folder. (251-626-2712) The choir would like to thank again Carol Cannon and Donna Scully for hosting the lovely choir dinner party back in June!



House-Keeping Notes

As we give thanks to God for all His blessings, one of those blessings are the rooms/buildings we occupy! If you use any part of the facility, please leave it as clean or cleaner than you found it.. Turn off all lights. Lock all outside doors when done . Also, if you need to turn A/C down while you are here, please return A/C thermostat to 74 degrees. Thank you!

Ascension Lutheran Church
8888 County Road 64
Daphne, Alabama 36526

*We are a congregation committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ reflected
in our ministries of worship, learning, care and outreach to our community.*